

This is the story of the Tollgate in Provo Canyon as told by Charles Alma Boren to his wife Annie G. Boren.

This is as my husband remembers the tollgate. He was a young boy. The tollgate was by Springdell, close to the fence and gate just as they came down the hill on the old Pole Canyon Road, and was run by Amsia Penrod. They charge 75 cents per team. Then it was moved up to where Billie Ferguson lived this side of Southfork.

One day old Jim Farrer went up the canyon with a load of fruit and went through the gate and told Ferguson he would pay as he came back. He had a team of mules and one of horses. On his return he told Ferguson he would not pay him on account of the rough road. And Billie lock the gate. Farrer, he unhitch the lead team of his wagon and throw his chain over the gate and post and pull them over; saying there would not be any more tollgate till the road was fixed. And he hitch his team back on the wagon and that was the last tollgate in Provo Canyon. Billie said he would have him arrested but was thrown out of court.

My husband Charles Alma Boren and his father Joseph Smith Boren had been up the canyon for wood and stopped at Billie Ferguson's to stay over night. But Charles said to his father, "Let's go home." And his father said, "All right, if that is how you feel." So Charles hitch up the team and as they were by Enos, Carter, the wagon slipped off the dugway into the river, team and all. Charles and Father both jump. Charles had to go in the river which was all mush ice and cut the team loose. The wagon was left in the river all winter. His father rode one horse and Charles he hung onto the horse's tail and run down the canyon to try and get warm as he was all wet. Then he got on the horse after a while and rode home. And when they landed, he could not get off the horse as his clothes was frozen stiff and his feet and hands was also frozen. That same night a large snowslide came down from across the canyon and over the river and up the other side and came back on top of the home of Billie Ferguson and he was killed. Had Charles and his father stayed, they would have been killed.

When we went to William Clayton and wife 50 Wedding Anniversary, Mrs. Minnie Thornburg and I, Annie G. Boren, we saw the house and oil paint of the old tollgate; her father home, I mean May F. Clayton.

Joseph Smith Boren and Charles run a saw mill at North Fork and cut timber for Mr. Nunn who put in the flume in Provo Canyon for the power plant. Grandpa told Mr. Nunn his flume would be taken out by slides; saying Oh, no; but it was knock out near Donnons; and the bridge was taken out by Bridle Veil Falls and they built a new bridge in the spring. And grandpa was the first to drive over it. It is up by the upper power plant Bridle Veil Falls.

Joseph S. Boren was also a freighter from California to Montana. Peter Wentz had the contract. There was Grandpa Boren, Neil Gray and Charles Gray, Uncle Peter Wentz, all freighted. They haul all kinds of things, flour and large barrel of whiskey from California to Montana and they had some hard time hauling. On one trip Charles Gray died on the Mohawk Desert. And they had to bury him off the side of the road. He was Grandpa's brother-in-law as was Peter Wentz. The Indians would steal their mules. They would sometimes have the indian guard their mules and keep two in camp then they turn them loose next morning. Indians would steal their mules like they did the emigrants, stealing their cattle.

(Note: This letter was given to Charles Mastin Wentz and Belva H. Wentz who thought it would be of interest to the Boren family and also members of their own family.)

*From Nola Borden  
Boren  
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